

Chief, Economic Research

24 April 1958

THRU : Chief, Industrial Division, ORR

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Reply to Chief, Economic Research, memorandum of 11 April 1958  
Regarding Suggestions for Additional Intelligence Sources.

1. The following two suggestions are advanced for consideration. I have undergone private mental debates on the potentialities of both collection methods and have not resolved within my own mind the potential value of either collection method. The costs involved would probable be quite nominal.

a. A source of possible wide interest within the community would be to have a recording device (either film or magnetic tape capable of receiving video inputs) within the US Embassies in Moscow and selected Satellite capitals for capturing shots of television signals. The exploitation would be similar to the use of foreign films as intelligence sources. Within the limitations of the subject matter normally presented to TV audiences, this collection capability could (1) extend out coverage of Soviet films, (2) provide for intelligence records to be made of live shots with backgrounds which include subjects of intelligence interest, and, (3) make possible comparisons of similar records over time.

b. A source of only narrow application for economic analysis of electric power networks might be found in miniature recording voltmeters which could be carried unobtrusively by official travelers in the USSR or Satellites when they have private access to electric power outlets (as in hotel rooms) for recording changes in the characteristics of the local current supply. I am not competent to evaluate the capabilities of this method of collection, and have serious reservations about it. There seems to be some possibility, however, that at least gross measures could be obtained on the extent to which multiple shift utilization of plant capacity is being used from observations of voltage fluctuations.

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